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TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION

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MTC Advisory Council  
February 11, 2009  
**Minutes**

Cathy Jackson called the meeting to order at 12:40 p.m. In attendance were members Wendy Alfsen, Paul Cohen, Angela Colombo, Raphael Durr, Rita Foti, Karla Goodbody, David Grant, Mary Griffin, William Hastings, Richard Hedges (via phone), Kathryn Hughes, Julio Lacayo, Sherman Lewis, Xiao-Yun Lu, Eli Naor, Margaret Okuzumi, Michael Pechner, Bob Planthold, and Don Rothblatt. Commissioner Giacomini also was in attendance.

**Minutes**

The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Public Comment**

No comment.

**Staff Report**

Ms. Therese Knudsen stated that a summary of the comments heard on the draft Transportation 2035 Plan and Environmental Impact Report will be presented at the February 13<sup>th</sup> Planning Committee meeting. A copy of the PowerPoint to be presented was emailed to Advisory Council members.

She also stated that MTC and the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT), Northern California Chapter, are co-sponsoring a free conference examining California's aggressive new greenhouse gas reduction legislation that will bring sweeping changes in how land use, transportation and environmental planning are used in the building environment. It will be held on February 24, 2009 from 8:30am – noon in MTC's Auditorium.

**Report from the Minority Citizens Advisory Committee (MCAC); Report from the Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee (EDAC)**

No report from MCAC.

Mr. David Grant stated that EDAC had a discussion on TransLink<sup>®</sup> and a study on access to social services and health care through transit.

**Federal Economic Stimulus/Recovery: Regional Programming Ideas**

Mr. Craig Goldblatt recapped the regional program priorities for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 that was discussed extensively at the Joint Advisors meeting on

February 10, 2009. He also provided an overview of comments heard at the Programming and Allocations meeting immediately preceding the Advisory Council meeting.

Committee comments included:

- How many jobs will this create? Response: Staff's methodology generally used is 27,000 jobs per billion dollars of funding (FHWA guide).
- What is the funding process? Response: There is a separate process for transit and surface transportation program. Transit will work through FTA, Surface Transportation will work through FHWA/Caltrans
- Will this serve as a Proposition 1B backfill? Response: Funds would have to stay within the Proposition 1B funding categories
- Did staff consider Dumbarton Rail? Response: There is a Strategic Expansion Policy for Rail that is based on projects that are ready to go. Dumbarton Rail is not ready to go for this timeframe – Congress has put forth a very strict and expeditious timeline on the funds.
- Can AC Transit use these funds to purchase new vehicles? Response: AC Transit can use these funds towards preventive maintenance and rehabilitation needs. Direct operating expenses for the system is not allowed under these funds.
- The \$91m should be put back into Dumbarton Rail.
- Not in favor of spending money on HOT lanes because it does not reduce the carbon footprint.
- What about Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE)? All funds are subject to the federal aide process – for FHWA, Caltrans oversees. FTA oversees this on the transit side.

### **Legislative Update**

Ms. Rebecca Long had to leave the meeting. Therese Knudsen provided a report as prepared by Rebecca. She stated that the Congressional Conference Committee reached an agreement on the federal stimulus bill. The overall total is \$789 billion, which is less than both the House and Senate versions of the bill. Staff did not have any details on the transportation agreement yet. The House is scheduled to vote on the bill on Thursday, February 12, with the Senate scheduled to vote on Friday, February 13, 2009.

Rebecca's report indicated that a deal on the state budget was reached, with a vote anticipated by Friday, February 13, 2009. It includes a 12 cent per gallon gas tax increase, but no further details on transportation were available. She also noted that it includes a 1% sales tax increase, an income tax increase that will require voter approval, and spending caps on the general fund.

### **Subcommittee Report – Land Use**

Mr. Eli Naor stated that they need to have a very concrete understanding of how they can, through land use, significantly impact greenhouse gas reduction. He noted that they are not going to get even close to meeting the objectives set forth in greenhouse gas reduction in this region over the next 20 years – so a coherent framework to shape decision-making that incentivizes systems that will yield effective land use patterns will be beneficial to the region.

In so doing, he stated that the committee has drafted a series of propositions to regionalize the debate: 1) Implement a single transit planning agency for all transit providers, 2) Implement a single land use entity for all municipalities within a single county, 3) Align SB 375 with the

T2035 Plan, 4) Develop a new carbon footprint metric to assess the efficacy of land and residential or commercial development within the Bay Area region. He also noted that the subcommittee has developed a list of T2035 projects that they would like to recommend for early implementation.

Committee comments included:

- Comments are on the right track
- Have to understand the economics of the issues – i.e. sales tax revenue, costs for services
- Has to be a larger conversation with the rest of the Bay Area - include the residents of the Bay Area about rethinking how to structure the communities.
- In all the other regions of the state the functions of ABAG and MTC are under one agency – although politically charged, this needs to happen
- Multiple agencies need to be involved – need to stress the inter-agency relationships
- The CMAs would be a great place to start – their functionality could be expanded because they already have interjurisdictional meetings every month.

### **SB 375 Resolution**

At the request of the Lane Use Subcommittee, the Advisory Council was asked to consider passing SB 375 Resolution urging the Commission to require all funding evaluations, where possible, to apply criteria, factors and guidelines mentioned in SB 375.

Committee comments included:

- Why is this needed? If it's already law, aren't they already supposed to be doing this?
- What is the CEQA exemption – what is the impact on local jurisdictions? Committee member response - SB375 is specific about the CEQA exemption in the text of the bill.
- The friendly amendment to broaden the resolution to apply to the current RTP as proposed by Wendy Alfsen was not accepted.

Mr. Richards Hedges moved approval of the SB 375 Resolution as presented, Ms. Mary Griffin seconded. Motion passed with Ms. Kathryn Hughes abstaining.

### **Subcommittee Report – Sustainable Transportation**

Mr. William Hastings stated that they met with staff on the sustainable transportation measures. Staff provided a response to the subcommittee, and the committee is looking at staff's responses at more detail prior to taking it to the Commission. The staff liaison will send a copy of staff's response out to all members.

He also mentioned that the committee just received a matrix of legislation related to sustainable transportation, which was requested of staff by the subcommittee.

### **Subcommittee Report – Evaluation**

Ms. Margaret Okuzumi stated that they met with staff and reviewed MTC documents related to the RTP, including those that focus on air quality and project performance. MTC does not go back and look at how the region has done in terms of air quality and the projects selected in previous RTPs. There are not many metrics available to measure this. Some possibilities include measuring household auto ownership or looking at Caltrans highway congestion data.

Indirect measures do not work, because they depend on a variety of factors, including weather patterns that change from year to year. She welcomed suggestions on how to proceed.

Committee comments included:

- The new census may be something to look at.
- Look at highway corridors
- Look at estimations of VMT
- The need to deal with carbon emissions is a totally game changing reality.
- The underlying problem is the lack of public understanding of the measures that need to be undertaken.
- Need to better understand pp. 1-5 in the Travel Forecasts Data Summary report.
- Request by Chair – for the next report, write out the purpose of the subcommittee. The Chair intends to have subcommittee reports at every other meeting.

**Subcommittee Report – Transportation Pricing and Economics**

No report.

**Other Business/Public Comment/Announcements**

There was no other business. The next meeting of the Advisory Council is scheduled for March 11, 2009. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.